

Challenges

When artistic research meets the scientific world

At Georgia Tech-Europe, you sail through extremes dimensions and leave the world of representation. Indeed, as you navigate these high-technology laboratories, you quickly realize that researchers live in a universe where space and time are beyond our understanding, with their scales being out of reach. Here, we talk about “atomic resolution,” “transmission electron microscopy,” “flexible MicroLED displays,” and “photon time-of-flight”. A vocabulary range that reflects the complexity of challenges that tomorrow’s society will be facing, without us even being aware. In this place, brilliant minds combine abstraction with concrete applications expertly. For in the invisible, all is translation, signals and patterns.

Initiated by Georgia Tech–Europe and within the framework of its Leonardo Program, the pairing of student photographers and student scientists turns out to be quite challenging and revealing from the outset a certain constraint: scientific research is beyond the commonly visible. Their fields of inquiry seem hardly compatible, as the former depend on a visually recognizable reality, while the latter explore scales that range from the astronomical to the nanoscopic. Thus, the spectrum of the reproducible is measured on the scale of the infra-thin, and the young artists have no choice but to observe what lies within grasp of their bare eye.

Yet, a journey through science is not simply about innovations of the future, improvement of existing technologies or societal progress to which a researcher passionately contributes. It is a journey through the unique spaces that laboratories are: noiseless and dustless microworlds in which meticulous and controlled sequences of gestures are orchestrated. You can capture extraordinary concentration, and the common thread is thin, but it exists: they are all trying to translate an idea or a thought-path. As artists develop the means to express their critical and reflective thinking through their view of the world, scientists take the time to validate their intuitions through various experiments to build a better future. Scientists test, develop, and demonstrate while artists explore, feel, and experience.

It is this world of the invisible that Aloona Godard, Lilou Hilt and Max Romaniuk, three students from the Lorraine Higher School of Arts, explored through a discreet meander across the singular gestures and spaces of scientific research, like so many possible points of anchorage on the visible world and its intangible content.

The exhibition is supplemented by a publication, furthering this committed thought process.

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